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ABSTRACT

This document is the results of the 2000 employee survey (Quality Evaluation of Service Trends) for all Howard Community College Employees. The response rate was 57% and respondents replied both by paper and electronically. Ratings for various topics and services were made on a five-point scale ranging from poor to excellent. Employees were also given an "unfamiliar with" category, which did not count in the final results. The following are the top five services as rated by employees: (1) cultural arts: theatre; (2) test center; (3) information technology: print shop; (4) Business/Sci and Tech/Arts and Humanities division of staff; and (5) division faculty: science and technology. Campus climate issues with high ratings for importance and satisfaction were student learning and diversity on campus. In the category of job satisfaction, the staff had high ratings for resources available on the job and personal safety on campus. The longer an employee had worked at HCC, the higher their level of personal satisfaction. The areas with the lowest satisfaction ratings in the survey were the following items listed in order: (1) adequacy of parking facilities; (2) HCC's merit pay system; (3) recognition for individual/team contribution; (4) rewards for contributing to improved quality; and (5) physical education facility (gym). (MZ)

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ED 481 526

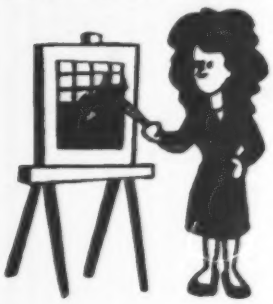
HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
You Can Get There From Here.

The Millennium QUEST: Results of the Survey

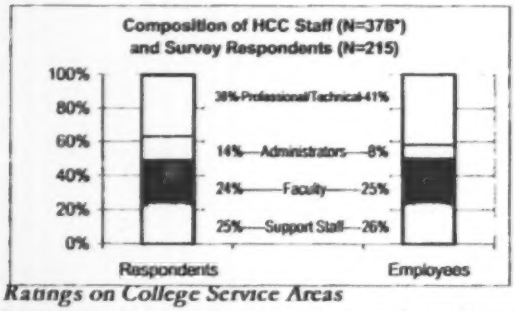
Annual Staff Survey

Research Report Number 108 January 2001

A major component of Howard Community College's continuing quest for excellence has been the annual employee survey. Initiated in 1990, the QUEST (Quality Evaluation of Service Trends) Survey affords all college employees the opportunity to give their assessment of college services, campus climate, job satisfaction, and college leadership. Results of the survey give direction for decision making and provide focal points for improvement activities and resource allocation. This report presents an overview of the survey findings. A set of detailed tables is available.



In 1999 the QUEST Survey was available electronically on the Internet for the first time. There appears to be increased acceptance of this method of doing surveys. In the year 2000 five times fewer respondents submitted paper copies of the survey (5 compared to 25 in 1999). The overall response rate for the survey was 57% (up from 54%).



Ratings on College Service Areas

Ratings on service areas were made on a five-point scale ranging from excellent to poor. There was also an "unfamiliar with" category that was not used to calculate mean ratings. That category, however, may be useful for service units to determine whether they need to make their services better known to their associate employees.

Ratings on the 60 services listed on the survey ranged from 3.07 to 4.30. The units shown in the table are the 15 units that received the ten highest ratings on the survey.

Top Rated Units on the Year 2000 QUEST Survey

Service Units	Mean	%Excellent*/ Above Average
1. Cultural Arts: Theatre	4.30	83%
2. Test Center	4.29	86%
3. Information Technology: Print Shop	4.28	83%
4. Div Ofc Staff: Bus/Sci & Tech/Arts & Humanities	4.25	82%
5. Division Faculty: Science & Technology	4.23	83%
5. Division Office Staff: Health/Social Sciences	4.23	83%
5. Teaching Learning Svcs Div: Audio-Visual Svcs	4.23	81%
6. Academic Support: Learning Assistance Center	4.21	85%
6. Television Studio & Video Services	4.21	81%
7. Admissions services	4.18	81%
7. Cultural Arts: Art Gallery	4.18	79%
8. President's Office Staff	4.16	83%
9. Division Faculty: Health Sciences	4.15	79%
10. Division Office Staff: English/Languages/ Math	4.14	81%
10. Teaching Learning Services Division: Library	4.14	82%

*These figures exclude those who chose "unfamiliar with" or who gave no rating.

It is interesting to note that last year the range for the ten highest ratings was from 4.21 to 4.39, somewhat higher than this year's range. Of the 60 service areas on the survey, 25 received ratings of 4.0 or higher, 27 were rated between 3.50 and 3.99, and eight were rated below 3.50. It is this latter group that may be targeted for improvement activities.

Another useful way of looking at the service ratings is to examine them by the percentage of respondents that gave ratings of four or five – above average or excellent. The units with the highest means also had the highest percentages of "Excellent" and "Above Average" ratings, with the *Test Center* and the *Learning Assistance Center* having the highest percentages: 86% and 85%, respectively. These percentages also point the way to areas that may need to improve. There were 12 units that had 10% or more of respondents giving them "Below Average" or "Poor" ratings, although four of those had mean ratings over 3.50. Those units with the highest levels of dissatisfaction were: *Security Service, Physical Education Facility, Academic Support: Retention Services, Cafeteria, Plant Operations: Housekeeping, Web Page, Plant Operations: Grounds, Athletics/Sports programs, Development: Grants Office, Plant Operations: Engineering/ Maintenance, Student Life/Activities Office, Information Technology: Telephones.*

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In attempting to derive meaning from the survey results, not only the mean and qualitative ratings, but also the dimension of change from year to year deserves attention. Of the 56 items that can be compared between the 1999 and 2000 surveys, 33 declined in ratings, 22 went up, and one remained the same. Most changes were slight, but there were two units that had changes of 0.25 or greater – one in a positive direction and one in a negative one. The unit with the greatest positive change was *Physical Education Facility* (up by 0.56 to 3.07), and that showing the greatest drop was *Web Page* (down by 0.40 to 3.24).

As has been seen on past QUEST surveys, there were differences, sometimes considerable ones on specific items, among the ratings of employee groups on campus.

Overall Ratings on Service Areas

Faculty	**3.99**
Professional/Technical	**3.86**
Administrators	**3.83**
Support Staff	**3.78**

While these overall ratings are of interest, it is at the individual unit level where such differences among employee groups have the most potential impact. For example, inspecting the top three ratings given by each employee group clearly shows the disparity in the ratings.

Support Staff's Ratings

1	Information Technology: Print Shop	4.13
2	President's Office Staff	4.11
3	Division Faculty: Science & Technology	4.07
3	Division Office Staff: Health/Social Sciences	4.07
3	TLS Division: Audio-Visual Services	4.07
3	TLS Division: Library	4.07

Faculty's Ratings

1	Test Center	4.65
2	TV Studio & Video Services	4.55
3	Information Technology: Print Shop	4.52

Administrators' Ratings

1	Cultural Arts: Theatre	4.42
2	Academic Support: Learning Assistance Center	4.32
3	Children's Learning Center	4.29

Professional/Technical Ratings

1	Academic Support: Learning Assistance Center	4.40
2	Cultural Arts: Theatre	4.38
3	Television Studio & Video Services	4.33

Looking across these categories it can be seen that there is no unit that is in the top three ratings of all four employee groups. In fact, when the top ten ratings are examined, only one unit appears among the top ten for each employee group: *Division Office Staff: Business/Science & Technology/ Arts & Humanities*. Awarding a star for each employee group rating in the top ten, would make that HCC's only four-star unit. Eight units receive three stars for being in the top ten ratings of three employee groups and three units get two stars.

SERVICE STARS

☆☆☆☆
Division Office Staff: Business/Science & Technology/ Arts & Humanities

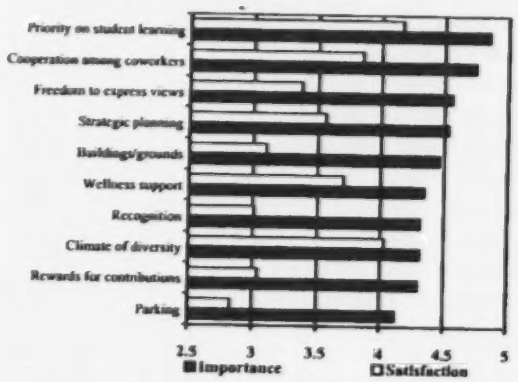
☆☆☆
Cultural Arts: Theatre
Test Center
Information Technology: Print Shop
Division Faculty: Science & Technology
Division Office Staff: Health/Social Sciences
Teaching & Learning Services Division: Audio-Visual Services
Admissions services
Division Faculty: Health Sciences

☆☆
Academic Support: Learning Assistance Center
Television Studio & Video Services
Cultural Arts: Art Gallery

Ratings on Campus Climate

HCC employees were asked to assess campus climate on the QUEST Survey by rating the importance of ten climate elements and then their satisfaction with those elements on five-point scales. The chart below shows those ratings. While all importance ratings were above 4.00, only two satisfaction ratings were: *High priority on student learning* and *Overall climate of diversity on campus*. Campus climate elements rated below 3.50 were: *Parking, Recognition for individual or team contributions, Rewards for contributing to improved quality, General condition of buildings and grounds*, and *Freedom to openly express viewpoints*.

Campus Climate: Importance/Satisfaction



As in most areas of the survey, there were differences in campus climate ratings by employment category, with faculty being the most positive in their ratings and support staff the least positive.

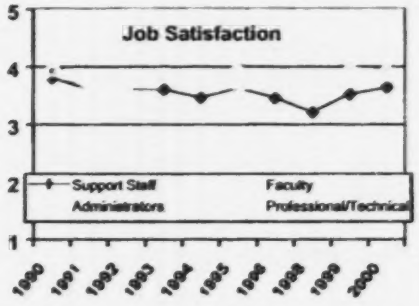
CAMPUS CLIMATE

Faculty	**3.96**
Administrators	**3.71**
Professional/Technical Staff	**3.71**
Support Staff	**3.67**
OVERALL RATING ON CAMPUS CLIMATE	**3.76**

Ratings on Job Satisfaction

There were eight elements of job satisfaction on which respondents rated importance and satisfaction. As seen on the chart below, all importance ratings but one were over 4.50. *Resources available to you to carry out your job* and *Your personal safety on campus* were the only two items that had satisfaction ratings over 4.00. There were three elements that had ratings under 3.50: *Merit pay system, The way your job performance is evaluated,* and *Salary you receive in your present position.*

True to the pattern evident over the past years, the faculty exhibited higher ratings on job satisfaction than the other employee groups. (Note: the composition of the "Administrator" and "Professional/Technical" categories has changed over the years.) The most striking difference in job satisfaction is between faculty and support staff. The 0.32 difference this year is less than it has been since 1994.



A demographic item asked on the survey is the number of years respondents have worked at HCC. The highest rates of satisfaction are for those employed the least (1-5 years) and most (over 15 years) numbers of years.

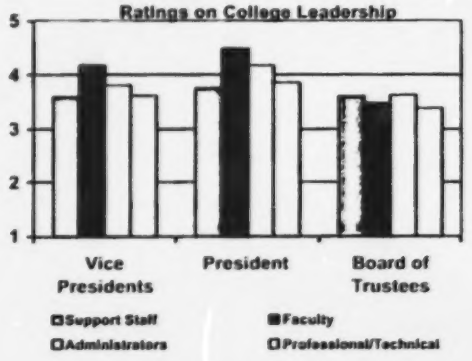
JOB SATISFACTION by YEARS AT HCC	
1 to 5 Years	**3.85**
6 to 10 Years	**3.71**
11 to 15 Years	**3.68**
16 to 20 Years	**3.94**
Over 20 Years	**3.88**
OVERALL RATING ON JOB SATISFACTION	***3.81***

Ratings on College Leadership/Governance

This section of the survey was broken down into three sub-sections, one each for the vice presidents, the president, and the board of trustees. In each there were four items and an overall rating. Most items in the leadership section were up over last year. For the vice presidents, the item *Involve you in decisions that affect you* was rated lower than 3.50. For the board of trustees there were three items under 3.50: *Builds a climate of trust and openness, Exhibits leadership that enhances climate,* and *Provides effective guidance to the institution.*

RATINGS ON LEADERSHIP/GOVERNANCE		
HCC'S VICE PRESIDENTS	**1999**	**2000**
Encourage creative and innovative ideas	3.80	3.79
Exhibit leadership that enhances climate	3.58	3.65
Share information you need to do your job	3.45	3.52
Involve you in decisions that affect you	3.16	3.27
Overall Rating on Vice Presidents	*3.67*	*3.77*
HCC'S PRESIDENT		
Fosters a student-oriented approach	4.09	4.16
Encourages creative and innovative ideas	3.97	3.97
Exhibits leadership that enhances climate	3.87	3.95
Builds a climate of trust and openness	3.61	3.69
Overall Rating on the President	*3.93*	*4.04*
HCC'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES		
Makes appropriate decisions on resources	3.30	3.53
Provides effective guidance to the institution	3.08	3.44
Exhibits leadership that enhances climate	3.00	3.40
Builds a climate of trust and openness	2.84	3.30
Overall Rating on Board of Trustees	*3.16*	*3.50*

When the ratings of the four employee categories are examined, an interesting pattern emerges: faculty gave the highest ratings to the vice presidents and president, and support staff gave them the lowest ratings. That pattern did not hold for ratings on the board of trustees, as shown in the chart below.



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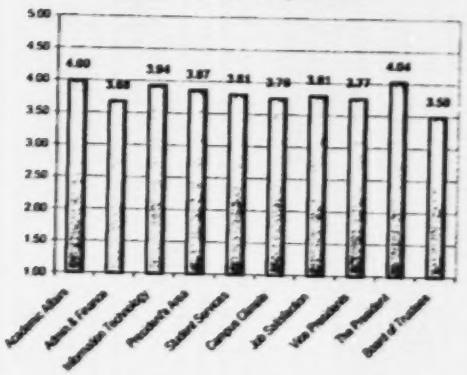
Surveying the Findings

On this year's QUEST Survey there were 95 separate items. By dividing the service units by their president team's head and using the other major sections of the survey, the 95 items can be grouped into ten areas. Those areas and their overall means are shown in the chart below. It can be seen that all of these major sections are at or above 3.50, indicating that there is no one major area of the college in need of intensive emergency improvement strategies.

Comparison of Overall Means of Major QUEST Survey Components



That is not to say, however, that there are no individual areas that need improvement. In fact, using the 3.50 figure as a cutoff, of all the 95 items on the survey, there are 20 that were rated below that figure. The following chart shows these areas, their ratings, and the section of the survey on which they appeared.

QUEST 2000: Ratings under 3.50

Services	Plant Ops: Engineering/Maintenance	3.48
Leadership	BOT- Provides effective guidance	3.44
Leadership	BOT-Exhibits leadership that enhances climate	3.40
Satisfaction	Salary you receive in your present position	3.38
Climate	Freedom to openly express viewpoints	3.37
Services	Plant Operations: Housekeeping	3.32
Services	Academic Support: Retention services	3.32
Leadership	BOT-Builds a climate of trust and openness	3.30
Leadership	VPs-Involve you in decisions that affect you	3.27
Services	Athletics & sports programs	3.26
Services	Web Page	3.24
Services	Cafeteria	3.22
Satisfaction	The way your job performance is evaluated	3.21
Services	Security Service	3.17
Climate	General condition of buildings and grounds	3.10
Services	Physical Education Facility (Gym)	3.07
Climate	Rewards for contributing to improved quality	3.04
Climate	Recognition for individual/team contributions	3.01
Satisfaction	HCC's merit pay system	2.95
Climate	Adequacy of parking facilities	2.82

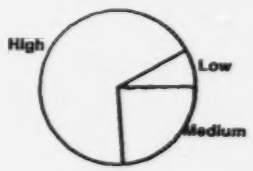
At the other end of the spectrum, there were 31 items on the survey that were rated 4.00 or higher. The table below shows the 17 areas that received the ten highest ratings. Kudos should be offered to these most deserving units. The items with means printed in gold are those that were given top ten ratings by three or four of the employee groups – the three- and four-star units.

QUEST 2000: Top Rated Areas

Services	Cultural Arts: Theatre	4.30
Services	Test Center	4.29
Services	Information Technology: Print Shop	4.26
Services	Div Ofc Staff:Bus/Sci&Tech/Arts&Humanities	4.25
Services	Division Faculty: Science & Technology	4.23
Services	Division Office Staff: Health/Social Sciences	4.23
Services	TLS Division: Audio-Visual Services	4.23
Services	Television Studio & Video Services	4.21
Services	Academic Support: Learning Assistance Ctr	4.21
Services	Cultural Arts: Art Gallery	4.18
Services	Admissions services	4.18
Services	President's Office Staff	4.16
Climate	High priority on student learning	4.16
Leadership	President - Fosters student-oriented approach	4.16
Services	Division Faculty: Health Sciences	4.15
Services	TLS Division: Library	4.14
Services	Div Office Staff: English/Languages/ Math	4.14

One of the most positive findings from the survey is that in general, most employees are satisfied with their jobs at HCC. The overall job satisfaction rating on this survey was 3.81, up slightly from last year. The ratings for each employee category were over 3.50. Areas of dissatisfaction had to do with merit pay, salary, and job evaluation. Employees were also dissatisfied with rewards for contributing to improved quality and recognition for individual or team contributions.

QUEST 2000: JOB SATISFACTION AT HCC
Rated on a 5-point scale: 4.5 = High, 3 = Medium, 1.2 = Low



The strongest recommendation to emerge from these survey results is that the findings be used. They provide a ready-made blueprint for focusing resources for improvement and for giving well-deserved recognition to the many units consistently performing at high quality levels.

[Please direct questions or comments about this report to Barbara Liverato, Office of Planning, Research, & Organizational Development, Howard Community College, Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, Maryland 21044. Phone: 410-772-4707, E-mail BLiverato@howardcc.edu]

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